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SUBJECT: EX-PRESIDENT CHISSANO CRITICIZES COVERAGE OF  
AFRICA IN U.S MEDIA

1. The international page of the April 11 edition of the official daily Noticias (circulation 80,000) carried an unattributed story headlined, "U.S. Media Coverage Harmful to Africa - according to Chissano." An informal translation follows:

2. Begin translation: North American media coverage of Africa focuses on bad news that harms the flow of investment and assistance to the continent, said former Mozambican president Joaquim Chissano last week in Johannesburg, South Africa.

3. "Negative perceptions bring negative results - a low level of aid and weak investment," said Chissano, who gave up the country's presidency in February after 18 years in power.

4. A study of coverage of Africa in five prominent American publications shows that there is little mention of the end of civil wars, economic growth, and growing access to education, averred Chissano in a press conference with other ex-heads of African states.

5. The study was conducted between 1994 and 2004 and concentrated on the New York Times, Washington Post, Wall Street Journal, USA Today, and U.S. News and World Report.

6. Calamities in Somalia, Rwanda, and West Africa got headlines, while transitions to democracy in Nigeria, Ghana, South Africa, Namibia, Mozambique and other points on the continent were ignored.

7. The former leaders of Mozambique, Ghana, Tanzania, Mauritius, Zambia, Benin, Botswana, Kenya, and Burundi said that they were not calling for Western journalists, and Americans in particular, to avoid coverage of Africa's problems, but for them to report positive events as well.

8. "Coverage of Africa. . . in best of hypotheses omits the continent's potential and progress," said Chissano after the meeting at the University of the Witwatersrand.

9. The former American diplomat, Boston University's Charles Stith, who conducted the study, said that the institution he represents chose the period 1994-2004 "because it was when important democratic changes and economic reforms took place on the continent. . . Coverage of Africa was for the most part negative," he concluded. End translation  
LA LIME